

# VERENDRYE PLATE

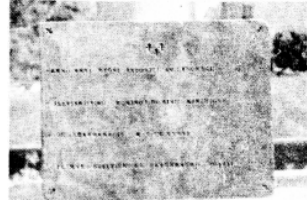
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BULLETIN SOUTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY JULY 1955

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THE VERENDRYE PLATE IS A PIECE OF LEAD ABOUT 3/16TH OF AN INCH IN THICKNESS AND 8½ X 6½ INCHES IN SIZE. IT DISTINCTLY IS **NOT** PHOTOGENIC. THE CONTRASTS ARE ALMOST NON-EXISTENT. BELOW IS A SMALL PICTURE OF THE **FORMAL** SIDE OF THE PLATE. THIS IS WHAT IS INCISED THEREIN.

ANNO XXVI REGNI LVDOVICI XV PROREGE  
ILLUSTRISSIMO DOMINO DOMINO MARCHIONE DE  
BRAUHARNOIS M D CC XXXXI  
PETRUS GAULTIER DE LA VERENDRYE POSUIT



ROUGHLY TRANSLATED THIS MEANS THAT  
IN THE 26TH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS DE  
FIFTEENTH ILLUSTRIOUS KING AND PRELATE. PIERRE  
GAULTIER DE LA VERENDRYE PLACED THIS.

FACTUALLY PIERRE GOT THIS PLATE FROM LOUIS BUT HAD DIED BEFORE IT  
WAS PLACED AND IT WAS HIS SECOND SON WHO ACTUALLY PLANTED THE PLATE.

BELOW IS A SMALL PICTURE OF THE **INFORMAL** SIDE OF THE PLATE. IT  
WAS JUST A BLANK UNTIL DURING THE NIGHT BEFORE IT WAS PLANTED IN THE GROUND AT  
FT PIERRE, WHEN SOMEONE, PRESUMABLY, FRANCOIS, THE SON OF PIERRE, THE FATHER,  
ROUGHLY CUT THE FOLLOWING IN THE PLATE.



AND THAT AGAIN ROUGHLY MEANS THAT  
PLACED BY THE CHEVALIER VERENDRYE HIS  
BROTHER LOUIS AND LALONDETTE AND A.  
MIOTTE 30 MARCH 1743,

POSE PAR LE  
Chevalier Verendrye  
à son fils Louis & Lalondette  
& Miotte  
Le 30 de mai 1743

OBVIOUSLY VERENDRYE OR WHOEVER CUT THE INSCRIPTION STARTED OUT TO DO A  
VERY SWELL JOB - HE WAS FIRST STUMPED BY THE INTRICACY OF THE LETTER S AND GRADUALLY  
AS HE HUNG TIRED THE LETTERING WORSENEO.

THE VERENDRYE PLATE IS ONE OF THE IMPORTANT HISTORICAL FINDS OF THE  
NORTHWEST. IT MADE SENSE, OUT OF THE JOURNAL OF VERENDRYE, WHICH HAD JUST ENOUGH  
FACTUAL DIRECTION IN IT AS TO CONFUSE THE MOST CAREFUL, AND SERIOUSLY LEAD ESTRAY  
THE BEST STUDENTS, TRYING TO TIE THAT JOURNAL INTO A GEOGRAPHICAL CERTAINTY, WHEN  
THE ONLY ACTUALLY CERTAIN POINT INVOLVED WAS

FT DE LA REINE, UP ON THE ASSINABOINE IN CANADA, LED TO A HOPELESSLY INVOLVED CONFUSION. ONE MAP PURPORTING TO SHOW ALL EARLY EXPLORATIONS AND PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, LED HIM OUT INTO MONTANA AND LEFT HIM HOPELESSLY STRANDED (ON THIS MAP HE NEVER DID GET BACK) OUT NEAR THERMOPOLIS, WYOMING. MOST MAPS AND ACCOUNTS HAD HIM OUT IN WYOMING AND NONE HAD HIM NEAR THE BLACK HILLS AND WITHOUT THE "KEY" OF THE VERENORYE PLATE, THEY WERE NOT AT ALL ILLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS, BASED ON THE BARE WORDS OF THE JOURNAL AND ITS SPORADIC WEST SOUTHWEST AND EAST SOUTHEASTS, ETC.

THE JOURNAL TOLD OF PLANTING THE PLATE, BUT IN AS MUCH AS THE ONLY IDENTIFIABLE INDIANS FOR CERTAIN IN THE WHOLE STORY WERE THE MANDANS, AND EXACTLY WHAT MANDANS AND WHERE LOCATED BEING AN UNCERTAINTY, IT WAS NOT TO BE WONDERED THAT HISTORIANS NEVER DID FIX ON ANYTHING ON WHICH THEY WERE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT. WITHOUT THE PLATE PROVIDING A FIXED POINT, THEY DIDN'T DO TOO PRETTY WELL.

BUT ON THE 16TH OF FEBRUARY 1913, SOME SCHOOL CHILDREN, INCLUDING HATTIE FOSTER AND GEORGE O'REILLY, WERE OUT WALKING ON A WARM SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND HATTIE SAW A METAL OBJECT STICKING OUT OF THE GUMBO. SHE WAS UNABLE TO GET IT OUT HERSELF AND GEORGE O'REILLY HELPED HER TUG IT OUT OF THE GROUND. CLEANED UP A LITTLE IT HAD SOME STRANGE WORDS ON IT AND GEORGE CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS LEAD AND SALABLE DOWN AT THE PRINT SHOP IN FT PIERRE. THERE IT MIGHT HAVE GONE INTO A SCRAP LEAD BIN BUT ENROUTE BACK INTO TOWN HE ENCOUNTERED GEORGE W. WHITE OF KENNEBEC AND ELMER W. ANDERSON OF WILLOW LAKE, TWO LEGISLATORS, TAKING THE SUM ON THAT BEAUTIFUL WARM FEBRUARY DAY. HE SHOWED THEM THE FIND AND THEY REPORTED THE MATTER TO THE STATE HISTORIAN, DOANE ROBINSON, WHO, RECOGNIZING ITS VALUE, MADE A CAREFUL SURVEY OF ALL THE KNOWN FACTS. AMONG THEM WAS A MOST SIGNIFICANT ONE. GENERALLY SPEAKING ROCKS ARE SCARCE ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE MISSOURI. THE EAST BANK IS STUDED WITH THEM FOR THE MISSOURI RIVER WAS THE TERMINAL MORAIN OF THE GREAT GLACIER. BUT THE OLD FREIGHTERS, OF WHOM THERE WERE SEVERAL STILL IN FT PIERRE, REMEMBERED THAT WHEN THEY FIRST CAME IN DURING THE LATE 1700'S THAT THE TOP OF THE HILL WHERE THE PLATE WAS FOUND HAD A PILE OF ROCKS ON IT, SOME OF THEM SCATTERED BY THE ELEMENTS AND THE ANIMALS, BUT STILL A DISTINCT PILE. THAT AGREED WITH THE JOURNAL ENTRY AS TO THE CAIRN OF ROCKS BEING PLACED OVER THE PLATE. ROCKS BEING SCARCE, MOST OF THEM HAD GONE INTO FT PIERRE DOORSTEPS AND THAT FACT PROVIDED THE FIRST AND MOST SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE TOUCHING ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PLATE. HATTIE FOSTER AND GEORGE O'REILLY, WHO COULDN'T AGREE ON WHO WAS THE REAL DISCOVERER WERE HANDSOMELY PAID FOR THEIR FIND AND THE PLATE, SINCE 1914, HAS BEEN A CHERISHED RELIC OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY.

BUT WHAT WAS THIS PLATE AND HOW DID IT COME TO BE BURIED ON A GUMBO HILL AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE MISSOURI AND BAD REVERES?

PIERRE GAULTIER DE VARENNES, SIEUR DE LA VERENDRYE OF THREE RIVERS, CANADA, WAS THE SON OF RENE GAULTIER, SIEUR DE VARENNES, A CAPTAIN IN THE FRENCH ARMY, WHO HAD COME TO CANADA IN 1685. PIERRE HIMSELF WAS BORN IN CANADA IN 1685. LIKE MOST CANADIANS, OF A VENTURESOME NATURE, HE WENT INTO THE FUR TRADE AND IN 1729, LURED BY ITS POTENTIAL WEALTH HE WENT WESTWARD AND THERE CONCEIVED OF A WATERWAY TO THE PACIFIC. THEREAFTER WITH INDOMINABLE ENERGY, HE AND HIS FAMILY PURSUED THE DREAM. PIERRE HAD GONE BACK TO FRANCE TO FIGHT IN THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION AND AT THE BATTLE OF MALPLAQUET WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. ON HIS RETURN TO CANADA IN 1712, HE MARRIED HIS BETHROTHED, MARIE-ANN DANDONNEAU AND REARED A FAMILY AND BY 1731, HE AND HIS SONS, THREE, HAD PENETRATED THE WILDERNESS AND ESTABLISHED FT ST CHARLES ON THE LAKE OF THE WOODS, THERE FOR SEVEN YEARS THEY LED A HEROIC LIFE, THE LAST OUTPOST OF THE TRADE. AFTER SEVEN YEARS THEY PUSHED ON WEST AND NORTHWARD TO LAKE WINNIPEG AND OUT ONTO THE ASSINABOINE WHERE

ROUTE OF THE VERENDRYE PARTY  
FROM FT DE LA REINE (A KNOWN POINT) IN 1742 AND 1742  
TO THE POINT WHERE THEY PLANTED THE VERENDRYE PLATE  
(NOW KNOWN TO BE AT FT PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA)  
PLATE WAS DISCOVERED 16 FEBRUARY 1913.

CANADA

Fort de la Reine

Assiniboine

Souris

MISSOURI

Yellowstone

Mountains of the HORSE Indians

NORTH DAKOTA

Mandans

1st Visit 5/19 to 7/23/42

Mandans 2nd Visit 5/18 to 5/26/43

Belle Hommes 9/18 to 10/9

SOUTH DAKOTA

WYOMING

Sighted the Mountains 11/43

Left Baggage 1/9

Reached Mts 1/21

Took flight 2/7

Back here 2/9

Playas 10/15

Horse 10/19

Belle Riviere 11/18

Arivaca 3/15

With Arivaca 3/19-4/2

Planted Plate 3/30/43

White

Bad

Arivaca

With Arivaca 3/19-4/2

Planted Plate 3/30/43

Back here 2/9

With Arivaca 3/19-4/2

Planted Plate 3/30/43

White

AT PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE THEY BUILT FORT DE LA REINE. THAT FALL AND WINTER, IN PURSUANCE OF HIS DREAM OF A WESTERN OUTLET, HE WENT DOWN THE SOUR IS (MOUSE) RIVER THE SOUTHERN BRANCH OF THE ASSINABOINE. IT IS PROBABLE THAT HE REACHED THE MANDANS ON THE MISSOURI THEN. HE HAD THREE PLATES, GIVEN HIM BY THE KING OF FRANCE AND ONE WAS GIVEN TO AN INDIAN CHIEF ON THIS TRIP. WHAT BECAME OF IT IS NOT KNOWN. PERHAPS SOME DAY IT MAY ALSO COME TO LIGHT BUT PROBABLY WAS CONVERTED BY THE INDIANS INTO BULLETS WHEN THEY FINALLY GOT THE OLD TRADE FUSEES. PIERRE BECAME ILL ON THIS TRIP AND RETURNED TO DE LA REIME. IN 1740 HIS FIRST SON, ALSO PIERRE, WENT TO THE MANDANS AND SO THE INQUIRY FOR THE WAY TO THE WESTERN SEA WENT ON. THE NEXT ADVENTURE WAS THAT OF 1742 (SEE MAP) WHEN NOT PIERRE OR HIS FIRST SON, PIERRE, BUT FRANCOIS AND LOUIS THE YOUNGER SONS SET OUT TO FIND THE FABLED PATHWAY TO THE GREAT SALT SEA OF THE WEST. THEIR JOURNAL TELLS THE STORY BUT FAILS MISERABLY TO CARRY ON A CERTAIN FACTUAL, DAY BY DAY, ACCOUNT OF THEIR WAN-DERINGS. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT THEY HAD NO MAP, NO RIVER, BUTTE OR STREAM HAD BEEN GIVEN ANY NAME. THEY THEMSELVES GAVE A NAME TO THE INDIANS THEY ENCOUNTERED. THEY WENT ONLY WHERE THE INDIANS WENT AND THE INDIANS WERE DEPENDENT ON WOOD, WATER, AND GAME FOR THEIR EXISTENCE. BUT WORST OF ALL THEY ONLY SPORADICALLY SHOWED THE ACTUAL DIRECTION OF TRAVEL, BY AND LARGE IT WAS WEST, SOUTHWEST UNTIL THEY ENCOUNTERED, OR RATHER FAILED TO ENCOUNTER THE GEMS DES SERPENTS (SNAKES) AND THAT FAILURE THREW INDIANS AND ALL INTO A PANIC AND THEY RETRACED IN TWO DAYS A 12 DAYS TRIP FROM WHERE THEY HAD CACHED THEIR BAGGAGE. FROM THAT TIME ON THEIR JOURNEY WAS EAST, SOUTHEAST AND IT WAS THE END OF THIS JOURNEY AT FT PIERRE, WHERE THE PLATE WAS FOUND.

AT THE MANDANS THEY HOPED TO ENCOUNTER THE HORSE INDIANS WHO CAME INTO TRADE MEAT FOR CORN. THEY WAITED TILL MID JULY AND NO INDIANS; SO PERSUADING TWO MANDANS TO GO WITH THEM THEY SET OUT FOR THE MOUNTAINS OF THE HORSE INDIANS. THEY ARRIVED THERE 21 DAYS LATER. ON ITS FACE THIS COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH FURTHER THAN SHOWS ON THE MAP YET THEY WERE GOING INTO A NEW COUNTRY, THEY WERE DEPENDENT FOR GAME, WOOD, AND WATER ON WHAT THEY FOUND. PRIOR TO THE FINDING OF THE PLATE THESE MOUNTAINS WERE THOUGHT TO BE PERHAPS THE BEAR LODGE OVER IN WYOMING. JUST WHO THE HORSE INDIANS WERE IS STILL UNCERTAIN. PERHAPS CHEYENNES? THEIR MANDAN GUIDES WERE MOST UNUNCERTAIN FACTORS AND NOT MEETING THE HORSE INDIANS THEY JUST SAT AROUND FOR OVER A MONTH. THEIR URGE TO GET ON WITH THE WESTWARD JOURNEY WAS NOT VERY APPARENT DURING THAT PERIOD, FINALLY THEY SAW SMOKE AND WENT TO INVESTIGATE AND CAME UPON A BAND OF MEN THEY CALLED BELLE HDIIMES. THEY STAYED AMONG THEM FOR 21 DAYS AND THEN MOVING THRU TWO BANDS OF PETITE REYNARD (FOXES) AND TWO OF PIOYAS (?) THEY CAME ON OCTOBER 10TH AMONG THE HORSE INDIANS AND IN A MONTH HAD ONLY GONE ON SOUTH TO THE BELLE RIVIERE INDIANS. BECAUSE THE NORTH FORK OF THE CHEYENNE LATER WAS CALLED THE BELLE FOURCHE, MEANING ABOUT THE SAME THING, EVERYONE WHO DIDN'T THINK THEY WERE OFF CASTING AROUND IN MONTANA OR WYOMING WAS SURE THAT THIS WAS THE BELLE FOURCHE. ACTUALLY THE MOREAU IN THE AREA SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST OF THE SLIM BUTTES IS A BEAUTIFUL RIVER AND JUST AS LIKELY A RECIPIENT OF THAT TITLE AS THE NORTH FORK. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU CAN'T SIGHT THE BLACK HILLS TILL YOU ARE ON THE DIVIDE SOUTH OF THE MOREAU. THAT IS ALSO A CIRCUMSTANCE THAT BEARS REMEMBERING. THEY THEN WENT SOUTH WITH THE HORSE INDIANS AND CAME TO THE BOW INDIANS, APPARENTLY THE ONLY INDIANS OF THE AREA WHO WERE NOT IN MORTAL FEAR OF THE GEMS DES SERPENTS.

IT WAS THE 21ST OF NOVEMBER UNTIL THEY CAME UP TO THE BOWS. WHILE THEY WERE WITH THE BOWS THEY WENT S, SW AND NW AND FINALLY AGAIN SW, IT WAS WHILE THEY WERE WITH THE BOWS AND WHILE SOMETIMES GOING NW THAT THEY SIGHTED THE MOUNTAINS ON JANUARY 1, 1743. TO READ THE ACCOUNT YOU MIGHT

THINK THEY WERE CONSTANTLY ON THE MOVE AND WAKING LONG DAILY JOURNEYS AND THIS, AS SUBSEQUENT EVENTS QUITE CLEARLY PROVE, WAS THE PITFALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO GOT THEM OUT INTO DISTANT WYOMING TO LEAVE THEM THERE. ACTUALLY THE JOURNAL ENTRIES DOES DEPICT THEM AS TRAVELING RATHER GREAT DISTANCES. A TRANSLATION OF THE JOURNAL IS TO BE FOUND ON PAGE 349 OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS - VOLUME VII.

NINE DAYS AFTER THEY SIGHTED THE MOUNTAINS THEY CACHED THEIR BAGGAGE, AS THEY DEEMED THEMSELVES NEAR TO THE SNAKES, AND THEN WENT ON FOR 12 DAYS TILL THEY CAME TO THE MOUNTAINS. THE VILLAGES OF THEIR ENEMIES WERE IN THE MOUNTAINS. JUST WHAT WAS DONE FROM THE 21ST OF JANUARY TO THE 7TH OF FEBRUARY IS NOT STATED. THEY WERE SOMEWHERE HEAR THEIR ENEMIES AND FINALLY ON THE 7TH OF FEBRUARY THE SCOUTS CAME IN AND TOLD THEM THE ENEMY WERE NOT AT THEIR VILLAGES. THE BOWS FEARING THE WORST, I.E., THAT THE SNAKES HAD GOT AROUND BEHIND THEM, TOOK OFF FOR THEIR RENDEZVOUS WHERE THEY HAD CACHED THEIR BAGGAGE. THEY MADE IT IN 2 DAYS, THE SAME JOURNEY THAT HAD TAKEN 12 TO 29 DAYS TO WAKE, ON THE WAY THEIR HORSES PASSED OVER SOME GROUND ON WHICH THEIR TRACKS COULD NOT BE SEEN, OBVIOUSLY SOME EXPOSED HARD PAN, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE OF THIS IN BUTTE COUNTY.

THIS ENDED THEIR WESTWARD SEARCH FOR THE WESTERN SEA. THEY STAYED WITH THE BOWS AN ADDITIONAL 21 DAYS, TRAVELING ALWAYS EAST OR EAST SOUTHEAST. THIS IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ENTRY IN THE JOURNAL. THEN THEY SPENT 10 DAYS WITH NO MOVEMENT WHILE ONE OF HIS MEN WENT TO THE VILLAGE OF THE PETITE CERISES. THESE WERE NUT DWELLERS AND CORN PLANTERS AND WE KNOW MUST HAVE BEEN ARICARA INDIANS. THEN THEY PROCEEDED ON IN A DIRECTION NOT INDICATED FOR 4 DAYS TILL THEY CAME TO THE ARICARAS, WHO WERE THEN 2 DAYS MARCH FROM HOME ON THE BANKS OF THE MISSOURI, ON THE 19TH OF MARCH 1743 THEY ARRIVED AT THEIR HOME ON THE RIVER. HERE THEY LEARNED OF A FRENCHMAN WHO WAS SUPPOSEDLY THREE DAYS JOURNEY AWAY APO TALKED TO AN INDIAN WHO HAD LEARNED PRAYERS WHILE WITH THE SPANIARDS. WHO THIS FRENCHMAN WAS, IF HE EXISTED IN FACT, HAS NEVER BEEN ASCERTAINED. IF HE HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AT SUCH A POINT, THREE DAYS JOURNEY FROM FT PIERRE, HE WAS CLEARLY SOUTH DAKOTA'S FIRST WHITE SETTLER, WHOEVER HE MAY HAVE BEEN.

THEY STAYED ON UNTIL THE 2ND OF APRIL WITH THE ARICARA AND THE JOURNAL ENTRY AS PERTAINS TO PLANTING THE PLATE IS AS FOLLOWS: 'I PLACED ON AN EMINENCE NEAR THE FORT A TABLET OF LEAD, WITH THE ARMS AND INSCRIPTION OF THE KING AND A PYRAMID OF STONES FOR MONSIEUR LE GENERAL; I SAID TO THE SAVAGES, WHO DID NOT KNOW OF THE TABLET OF LEAD I HAD PLACED IN THE EARTH; THAT I WAS PLACING THESE STONES AS A MEMORIAL OF THOSE WHO HAD COME TO THEIR COUNTRY R.

IT THEN TOOK HIM 47 DAYS TO GET BACK UP TO THE MANDAN VILLAGES. AS THAT LOCATION IS ALSO UNCERTAIN THE RATE OF MARCH IS UNCERTAIN BUT WAS NOT LESS THAN 4 TO 6 MILES PER DAY. THEY WERE TRAVELING ALONE, BUT MET A TRAVELING VILLAGE OF 25 LODGES OF THE GEMS DE LA FLEECIE COLLEE (SIOUX OF THE PRAIRIE) ENROUTE. ON THIS TRIP THEY TRAVELED ALWAYS NORTH, NORTHEAST OR NORTHWEST. THIS ARGUES, BUT DOES NOT PROVE, THAT THEY WERE EAST OF THE MISSOURI ON THIS LEG OF THEIR JOURNEY.

THE FOREGOING IS OUR VERSION OF WHAT THEY DID AND WHERE THEY HAD BEEN. ALL HISTORIANS WILL NOT AGREE WITH THIS VERSION. HOWEVER WE HAVE SOME REASONS WHICH WE CONSIDER MOST LOGICAL FOR THE PREMISES AS MADE:

1. TRAVELING BY THEMSELVES OVER A WELL KNOWN AND PREVIOUSLY TRAVELED ROUTE THEY MADE 15 MILES PER DAY. (DE LA REINE TO MANDANS)
2. TRAVELING BY THEMSELVES BUT OVER AN UNKNOWN ROUTE, THE EXACT POINT OF DESTINATION OF WHICH WAS UNCERTAIN THEY MADE FROM 4 TO 6 MILES PER DAY. (FT PIERRE TO MANDANS)

3. TRAVELING WITH MANDAN GUIDES TO THE "HORSE MOUNTAINS" THEY MADE NO BETTER TIME. (4) TO 6 MILES)

4. THE SO CALLED "HORSE MOUNTAINS" WHEREVER THEY MAY HAVE BEEN, WERE BY ALL THEIR DIRECTIONAL INDICATIONS AS GIVEN, OF A CERTAINTY, NORTHEAST OF THE MOUNTAINS THEY SIGHTED ON JANUARY 1, 1743.

5. ALL OF THEIR TRIPS, WHILE TRAVELING WITH BANDS OF INDIANS, WERE MANIFESTLY SLOW FOR THEY WERE DEPENDENT ON WOOD, WATER, AND GAME AND THAT THEY COULD NOT MOVE FAR IS CERTAIN WHEREVER ANY DATUM POINTS ARE AVAILABLE.

6. HOWEVER, WHEN SPEEDED BY FRIGHT THEY MANAGED TO ACHIEVE IN TWO DAYS WHAT HAD TAKEN THEM 29 DAYS TO MAKE WHILE IN SEARCH OF THEIR ENEMIES.

7. THE ONLY POINT CERTAINLY FIXED BY THE JOURNAL IS THE PLACE WHERE THE PLATE WAS PLANTED AND FOUND ON THE MISSOURI. IT WAS OF A CERTAINTY SOUTHEAST OF THE PLACE WHERE THEY CACHED THEIR BAGGAGE. THUS THE PLACE THE BAGGAGE WAS CACHED WAS INEXORABLY NORTHWEST OF FT PIERRE.

8. THEY SPOKE OF ONLY TWO 'MOUNTAINS' - THOSE OF THE HORSE INDIANS - THOSE THEY SIGHTED ON JANUARY 1ST AND WHICH THEY ARRIVED AT ON JANUARY 21ST.

9. THUS THOSE MOUNTAINS HAD TO BE (1) THE BLACK HILLS OR (2) MOUNTAINS TO THE NORTH AND WEST OF THE BLACK HILLS.

10. IF THOSE MOUNTAINS WERE NW OF THE BLACK HILLS, THEN TO REACH FT PIERRE THEY WOULD HAVE HAD TO PASS THE BLACK HILLS TO THE SOUTH ON THEIR JOURNEY WHICH WAS ALWAYS EAST OR SOUTHEAST. THEY MENTIONED NO MOUNTAINS ON THIS JOURNEY.

THIS LAST FACT IS STRONG AND ALMOST UNCONTESTED EVIDENCE THAT THEY WERE NOT AT ANY MOUNTAINS NW OF THE BLACK HILLS.

IT HAD TAKEN THEM 20 DAYS TO REACH THE "HORSE MOUNTAINS" AND 127 DAYS TO REACH THE NEXT MOUNTAINS. WHEN IN FLIGHT THEY MADE A CONSIDERABLE MILEAGE FOR TWO DAYS. OBVIOUSLY GRASS FED ANIMALS COULD NOT CONTINUE SUCH A PACE FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME. BUT IN THE NEXT 36 DAYS, ON 10 OF WHICH THEY MADE NO MOVEMENT, THEY CAME AT LEAST 170 MILES OR NEARLY 7 MILES PER DAY.

TAKING ALL THESE ELEMENTS INTO CONSIDERATION IT APPEARS HIGHLY IM' PROBABLE THAT THE VEREHDREY PARTY WAS EVER OUT OF NORTH AND SOUTH DAKOTA. ANY CONTRARY CONCLUSION HAS TO DO VIOLENCE TO (1) THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL AS SET OUT IN THE JOURNAL AND (2) ELIMINATE THE POSSIBILITY OF PASSING THE BLACK HILLS ENROUTE AND (3) MAKE THE JOURNEY FROM WHERE THEY CACHED THE BAGGAGE TO FT PIERRE A MUCH MORE SPEEDY ONE THAN ANY OTHER EXCEPT THAT FROM FT DIE LA REINE TO THE MANDANS.

NOTHING BASED ON SO MANY PREMISES IS UNCONTESTED BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE FOREGOING FACTS, FORM THE BASIS FOR A LOGICAL CONCLUSION AND THAT ANY OTHER CONCLUSION MUST FIND A WAY OF AVOIDING THOSE FEW FACTS THAT THE JOURNAL, PLUS THE FINDING OF THE PLATE, DOES PRESENT.